

Moving

by MCTVFan

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Summary: Andy decides to go house hunting, but fails to include a key person in the process. When everything begins to blow-up in his face, his relationship with Sharon is tested and a case may be on the line. Based on some of the spoiler tidbits for season 5 that we've received thus far. Shandy

1. Chapter 1

A/N: Thank you all so much for all of your support with my other stories! I continue to be overwhelmed. This one is based on some of the hints that James Duff has been dropping about season 5. This is my take on his ****spoiler**** that Andy, Provenza, and Buzz go house hunting and Buzz films it because someone can't be there. I have finished this story and it will be three chapters. The other two are in the revision stage, but I should have them posted in the coming days. As always, I welcome any and all feedback.

Obviously, I do not own Major Crimes or any of these fabulous characters. That honor belongs to James Duff and co. I just enjoy writing about them.

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><p>Chapter One<p>

"Are you rolling?" Andy asked as he turned to look into the camera that Buzz Watson was currently holding.

"Yes, Leitenant, just as you requested," answered the LAPD's newest reserve officer with a tinge of annoyance in his voice.

"I don't understand why you dragged Buzz and me along with you to see this house in the first place," complained Provenza.

"I told you. I need your opinion and I need Buzz to film the house,"

answered Andy.

"I have a novel idea, why don't you bring your _girlfriend_ with you if you want her to see the house you plan to move into with _her_," Provenza added in his usual grumpy tone.

The three men continued to move through the modest 3-bedroom, 2-bath ranch located in a quiet neighborhood not far from work.

"I told you, Sharon is busy".

"The _Captain_ is too busy to see a house that she could, potentially, spend the rest of her life living in?" Provenza asked suspiciously.

"Yeah," Andy answered unconvincingly. Provenza instantly picked up on the other man's hesitation and decided to pounce. Buzz rolled his eyes and continued filming.

"Oh god, do not tell me," Provenza began. "The Captain doesn't know, does she?"

"Not exactly," Andy confessed while looking around.

"And you think it's a good idea to _surprise_ her with a video tour of the house? Ye gads, Flynn, you are an idiot!" Provenza exclaimed.

"Not surprise her. More like... Well... Convince her," Andy explained delicately.

Provenza stopped in his tracks to turn and face his partner. He rolled his eyes heavenward. Meanwhile, Buzz kept rolling. "Are you telling me that you haven't even discussed this whole 'moving in together' thing with the woman you want to move in with?!" Provenza asked incredulously.

"It's just that I'm not sure how she's going to feel about it, so I figured if I show her a great house when I ask her, things might go better," Andy explained.

Provenza proceeded to tour the house while shaking his head at his partner's lack of forethought. "You know, sometimes, I really don't understand why she is even dating you."

Buzz couldn't help but shake his head and laugh at the two older men. He continued to follow them with the camera rolling. Provenza got ahead and entered the master bedroom.

"Flynn, I don't think this is the house for you and the Captain," he called from the bedroom.

"Yeah? Why's that?" Flynn answered while walking towards the bedroom. As he entered, the question answered itself. There on the empty bedroom floor was a bloodied body that had, quite obviously, been shot and left for dead at least a day ago.

"Unless I don't know the Captain very well, she's not going to want to sleep in the same room where we found a body," Provenza stated matter-of-factly. All three men stopped in their tracks and stared

down at the gruesome sight before them.

"Well, the good thing is, I got it all on tape," Buzz added. The other two men turned and gave him an annoyed look. "What? How often do you get the actual discovery on tape?"

"Flynn, call it in," Provenza instructed.

* * *

><p>After the body had been called in and the rest of their team started filing in, Andy and Provenza began to make their way out of the house to talk with the others.<p>

"So, you really think Sharon won't want to buy this place?" Andy asked. Provenza stopped walking and turned to his partner.

"What is wrong with you? Have you seen the Captain with body fluids? Does she seem like the type of person who wants to live in a house where someone suffered a violent death?" Provenza asked incredulously.

"Well, no, probably not. I was just thinking about how the Chief bought that house that had been a crime scene. She got a real deal on it!" Andy exclaimed with a tinge of excitement.

"Yes, but I think we can all agree that the Captain is NOT the Chief," Provenza answered.

With that their conversation was halted because the subject of it stepped out of her car and began walking towards them.

"Good afternoon, lieutenants. So, we have a body here in this vacant house?" She asked approaching her two senior lieutenants.

"Well, it's not exactly vacant, just for sale, but yeah. There's a body in the master bedroom," Andy tried to explain. Provenza just rolled his eyes.

"This seems like a nice neighborhood. Quiet," Sharon added.

"Right? It's really nice and the neighbors seem friendly," Andy said with a smile. Provenza gave him a look and Sharon looked slightly confused by Andy's behavior.

"Why don't we just go inside and show the Captain what we have?" Provenza suggested. The group moved inside the house and Andy was sure to walk close to Sharon.

"So, it's a standard 3-bed, 2-bath ranch, but it's got a great layout," Andy started enthusiastically. Provenza rolled his eyes for what felt like the millionth time. How could his partner be so dense? Sharon stopped and gave Andy a half worried/half confused look.

"Andy, is everything alright?" She asked.

"Yeah, great. Why?" He answered a little too agreeably. Sharon studied his face and then looked to Provenza. After studying him, she returned her gaze to Andy. Realization crossed her features.

"Who found the body?" She inquired.

"Well, that's actually a funny story. You see, Buzz, Provenza, and I were..." Andy started before Sharon cut him off.

"Do not finish that statement," she said closing her eyes and shaking her head. "I don't want to know right now. Any story that starts off like that never ends well, and I am not in the mood to handle whatever it is the three of you got yourselves into this time."

Provenza welcomed the delay in having to relay their afternoon. Although, he knew it would be short lived and that they would have to come clean to their captain when they got back to the station. He continued to head towards their unfortunate discovery.

"You're right, Captain. Probably best to just focus on the murder for now. Besides, Buzz has the discovery on tape," Provenza explained.

"On tape? Ok, then I should head back to the murder room and have him cue it up for me," she decided. Andy started to panic.

"Uhhh, why don't I go tell Buzz to head back and get it ready. This way you can see the body and the tape will be ready when you get there. I mean, I've already seen it," Andy added quickly. Sharon nodded her head and proceeded to the master bedroom with Provenza. Meanwhile, Andy headed outside to find Buzz.

"Buzz, the Captain wants you to take the tape back to the station and get it ready for her," Andy explained.

"Ooooooooo-kay, if that's what she wants," He said hesitantly and then gave Andy a knowing look while trying not to smile.

"About that. So, you got... Everything on tape?" Andy asked.

"Yup," Buzz answered with a knowing smile.

"Any chance you can leave the sound off?"

"Nope. Your house tour video is now evidence. If I tamper with it at all, I'd be in violation of rule..." Buzz started, but was interrupted by Andy.

"Yeah, yeah, we know. You know everything now that you're 'Reserve Officer Watson'. Fine. Go take it back to electronics and if you happen to lose it somewhere along the way, well, no one would blame you," Andy said annoyed.

"Actually, everyone would blame me including the Captain. I'm going to be on my way now, Lieutenant. And don't worry, the tape will be safe and sound."

Great. Just great, Andy thought.

* * *

><p>After the team had wrapped things up at the crime scene, they reconvened back at the murder room. In the interim, Andy and Provenza gave their statements and Buzz, who had already given his at the crime scene, cued up the tape to the start of the day's events and then had Tao pull it up on his computer. Andy watched helplessly as Buzz alerted their captain that the tape was ready for her to view. And the younger man's knowing smirk did not go unnoticed by Andy who simply shook his head and rolled his eyes skyward wondering how he managed to get himself in this awful situation. He saw Sharon cross the murder room from her office to Tao's computer. Once she reached her destination, she turned towards the two men in the video.<p>

"Why don't you two join me in case I have any questions," she suggested and then looked back at the computer screen in front of her.

"Oh, there'll be questions," Provenza muttered under his breath. Andy just gave him a look and then hesitantly proceeded to walk over to his boss and an uncertain future with her.

"Ok, everybody ready?" Tao asked with his usual enthusiasm. Sharon nodded and Tao started to play the tape that Buzz had recorded.

TBC

2. Chapter 2

I am completely overwhelmed by the positive reaction to this story! Thank you all so much! I hope this chapter lives up to the promise of the first. Either way, I welcome your feedback.

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><p>Chapter Two<p>

The tape began to play and Andy and Provenza could be seen walking up to the house talking to the realtor. They seemed to make small talk as the realtor let them in and told them to "feel free to look around" and let him know "if they had any questions". Once inside the house, the two older men are seen looking around as they make comments on the house. Andy is overhead asking Buzz if he's rolling. Then, things took a decidedly more interesting turn. Provenza is seen walking slightly ahead of his partner.

"I don't understand why you dragged Buzz and me along with you to see this house in the first place," is heard as the tape played. Sharon stood with her arms crossed and her attention glued to the screen. She heard Andy answer with some explanation about needing the older lieutenant's opinion, which surprised her because she didn't know that Andy was in the market for a new house. Then, she heard something that caused her to pause and pull back suddenly. Provenza said, "I have a novel idea, why don't you bring your girlfriend with you if you want her to see the house you plan to move into with

her".

Her eyes went wide, but she kept her focus on the screen. The others seemed to grow uncomfortable around her, but she pretended not to notice. From their desks, Julio and Amy exchanged amused looks and continued to eavesdrop on the conversation on the recording. The tape continued to play until Sharon heard Provenza say something about her not knowing about Andy's plans and at this point, she had heard enough.

"Ok, Mike, can we just skip to the part where they find the body?" She interjected quickly, and the others detected a slight undercurrent of uncomfortableness in their usually calm and collected captain. Tao fast forwarded the recording until the body came on the screen. He let it play, and Sharon inwardly cringed at the ensuing conversation. Once the recording stopped, she turned to leave making sure to avoid eye contact with Andy.

"Thank you, Mike. We need to speak with the realtor and check in with Dr. Morales to see if he has an ID yet. Oh, and we should pull the real estate logs to find out who else accessed that house in the last 48 hours," she said as she walked towards her office. Andy watched her retreating form and decided to try to salvage what he could.

"Captain...", he started, but she quickly cut him off.

"Not now, Andy," she said curtly and then walked into her office closing the door and blinds.

Once she was in the safety of her office, Sharon sunk into her chair, removed her glasses, and pinched the bridge of her nose. She was angry, upset, disappointed, and embarrassed. What was Andy thinking? The captain in her wanted to throttle him for getting involved in this debacle and dragging Provenza and Buzz into it. The girlfriend in her wanted to shake him until he gave her a really good reason why he went behind her back and looked at a house for them, and then let her get completely blindsided by it in front of their team. She didn't have time to do either, so she resolved to deal with her lieutenant and her boyfriend after they solved the murder.

Andy watched Sharon close her door and draw her blinds before he made his way back to his desk. He sat down in his seat with a sigh. His partner stared at him with a knowing look on his face.

"Yeah, yeah, I know. You told me so," Andy offered defeated and annoyed. Provenza just continued to stare at him.

"Yes, I did, didn't I? But even I couldn't have predicted that it was going to blow up so spectacularly in your face," he conceded.

"Sir, moving in together tends to go more smoothly when both parties know it's happening," Julio snickered.

"Yeah, communication is really important in a relationship," Amy added trying to suppress a laugh.

"I was going to talk to her about it," Andy said defensively.

"When was that, Sir. Before or after you bought the house?" Julio

replied with amusement in his tone.

"Ok, enough. Flynn has dug himself a big enough hole here all by himself," Provenza scolded the two younger detectives. With that, they went back to work, but neither could keep the small smiles off their faces.

Provenza moved his focus back to his sullen partner. "What exactly were you thinking, Flynn? You planned on showing her that tape eventually knowing what she would hear on it".

"I was going to talk to her first. If things didn't go well with the living together discussion, then I'd forget the video tour. If they went well, then I figured we'd share a good laugh at my expense. I definitely wasn't picturing this," he explained.

"Ok, look. It's not that bad. I'm sure the Captain will get over it".

"I looked at a house without asking her if she wanted to move in together and then had Buzz film it. And if that wasn't enough, the perfect house that I picked out had a body in it which led to everyone seeing the video," Andy said shaking his head.

"Ok, so maybe it is that bad, but the Captain is used to you making an idiot of yourself. So, you dragged her into it this time. She had to know that would happen sooner or later when she unwisely decided to enter into a relationship with you," Provenza stated. He noticed Andy's continued depressing look and decided to take mercy on him. He leaned forward and lowered his voice. "Look, that woman is just as crazy about you as you are about her. She will forgive you. Eventually".

"Gee, thanks," Andy replied.

"In the meantime, give her some space. She needs to work through it and calm down before you go all 'hurt puppy dog' on her," Provenza advised.

"Yeah, you're probably right," Andy agreed.

"Oh, I know I'm right".

* * *

><p>The rest of the day was filled with interviews and evidence, and left little time for anyone to dwell on the events from earlier in the day. Once they reached a series of dead ends, they decided to call it a night and start fresh in the morning. Andy sat at his desk finishing up a few case notes when he saw Sharon walk by with her bag and coat slung over her arm.<p>

"Good night, everyone. Don't stay too late. We'll start fresh in the morning," she said on her way out. Everyone returned the sentiment and she was gone. Like the rest of the day, she was formal and distant with Andy, but he decided to give her space as his partner had suggested.

When he finally made it home, he wanted nothing more than to call her. He wanted to hear her voice, know that things were ok between

them or that they would be, but he didn't want to make them worse. He hoped that she would call him, but his phone remained silent all night. So, this is what space felt like.

* * *

><p>When Sharon arrived in the murder room the next day, she noticed that her two senior lieutenants were already at their desks pouring over evidence. She gave them both a cordial salutation and continued to her office. Once inside, she removed her bag and coat and went to sit at her desk when she noticed something unexpected resting on it.<p>

She paused and then leaned over to pick up the white to-go cup of coffee bearing the logo of her favorite local coffeehouse. She lifted it to her lips and took a small sip. It was her favorite brew, and it was exactly how she liked it. She closed her eyes and let the flavor roll over her taste buds. It was delicious, and she knew exactly who had left it for her.

As she placed the cup back on her desk, she noticed something written on it. She rotated it slightly in her hand so she could read it better. There in familiar scroll was a simple, but meaningful, "Sorry". Sharon stared at it for a few moments before letting out a sigh. She pursed her lips and finally took a seat in her chair. She stole a glance out to the murder room and immediately looked in Andy's direction. He seemed to be busy and wasn't looking at her. She made a small, sad smile. Yes, she still had to deal with that situation.

In the murder room, Andy sat at his desk trying to make it look like he was focusing on the case when all he could think about was Sharon. He hoped she liked the coffee and the gesture, but he was too worried about spooking her to look in her office to find out. Since he couldn't sleep much the night before, he figured he'd leave his house extra early so he had time to go across town to her favorite coffeehouse. She had taken him there a few times, and he loved to watch her savor every sip of her favorite drink. He figured if anything could show how sorry he truly was, it was that cup of coffee.

"Is she drinking it?" his partner asked without looking up from his file. Provenza had been present when Andy came in with the coffee and knew his partner was stewing over it instead of the case.

"I don't know. Honestly, I'm afraid to look," Andy admitted.

"Well, nothing says 'sorry' quite like a cup of ridiculously expensive coffee," Provenza deadpanned. He glanced in his captain's direction and saw her enjoying the cup of coffee.

"I'm going to talk to her, too. Believe me, I learned that lesson. I'm just giving her space like you said. Coffee was just a way of communicating without invading her space," Andy explained.

"While you're passive aggressively apologizing and pretending to give your girlfriend space, could you also focus on the case? The sooner we solve it, the sooner you can solve the problem with the Captain and the sooner we can all put this whole unfortunate incident behind us," Provenza pleaded.

"You're just annoyed because I didn't bring you any expensive coffee," Andy said knowingly. Provenza scoffed and went back to focusing on the case.

* * *

><p>By the end of the day, the case had been solved, a deal made, and paperwork completed. Andy really wanted to talk to Sharon, but wasn't sure if the timing was right yet. She had seemed to be in a better mood today, but she still wasn't her usual self with him. She was professional and nothing more. Andy wasn't surprised, but he was having a hard time reading her.<p>

He finished his paperwork before some of the others, but wanted to wait to turn it in until everyone had left just in case she was willing to talk. As he watched Julio exit the Captain's office after successfully completing his report, he looked around the murder room. Everyone else had called it a night leaving just him, Sharon, and a retreating Julio. Andy figured it was now or never. He took a deep breath and stood from his chair. Before entering her office and forcing them into their first moment alone since before this whole debacle, Andy glanced at Sharon through her open blinds. She seemed to be lost in her pile of paperwork. She looked focused, but not angry.

Andy decided to suck it up and knock on her open office door. After all, he had to turn in his paperwork some time. He just hoped this was the right time.

TBC

3. Chapter 3

Thank you so much again for all of your reviews and support. Here is the third and final chapter. I have enjoyed going along on this journey with these awesome characters. As usual, I welcome any and all feedback.

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><p>Chapter Three<p>

Andy knocked lightly on Sharon's open office door. She told him to come in without looking up, so he still wasn't able to ascertain her mood. He knew that she was aware of who was entering her office since everyone else had already left for the night. Andy's stomach was in knots and his nerves on fire, but he somehow managed to will his feet to move forward one step at a time.

Sharon knew exactly who had come into her office. She had been anticipating this all evening, and she had a feeling Andy was going to wait until everyone else had gone home. To be honest, she didn't really like having these sorts of discussions at work, but it was neutral ground and what happened between them had, unfortunately,

blurred the lines between personal and professional. This was exactly what she had feared when she entered into this relationship with her lieutenant.

"I... Uh... Finished my report. I think you'll find everything in there," Andy started as a way of cutting through the very thick tension occupying her office. When she didn't respond or look-up, he decided to fill the silence once again. "I'm pretty sure I dotted all my I's and crossed all my T's," he added as a way of injecting some humor into the situation. Sharon didn't seem too amused.

"You're always very thorough, Andy," she said flatly. "I wouldn't expect this time to be any different," she added finally looking up at him. Ok, so maybe the humor was a bad idea, Andy thought. Her face was neutral and gave absolutely nothing away. Andy wasn't sure what to say or whether his mouth would even be able to form the words if he did, so he looked down and allowed the silence to surround him. When Sharon still didn't say anything, he decided this was not the right time and turned to leave.

"Ok, well, have a good night," he said defeated. He started walking towards her door. He almost made it out of her office when he heard her voice cut through the deafening silence.

"Andy, we should talk," she said. Andy turned back around and began walking towards her desk once again. She indicated that he should sit, so he took a seat in one of the chairs in front of her desk. Sharon took a deep breath and let it out slowly. Andy couldn't handle the tension any longer and decided to go with his gut and say what he had wanted to say since this whole thing blew up in his face.

"I am so sorry, Sharon. I'm an idiot and I shouldn't have gone and looked at a house without even talking to you about moving in together first...", he began before Sharon held up her hand and cut him off. He watched as she silently got up from her desk and walked around it. She sat down in the chair next to his and looked him in the eye.

"Then why did you, Andy?" She asked, and it sounded like a genuine attempt at understanding and not an accusation. Andy decided to go with the truth.

"Because... I'm so afraid of messing this up," he conceded quietly. Sharon tilted her head and softened her expression. Andy felt encouraged and decided to continue. "I was afraid that asking you to move in together could ruin what we have, so I thought if I found a great place, you might be more interested in the idea. It was stupid." Sharon contemplated his words for a moment.

"Andy, there are going to be times when we are not on the same page. As long as we are willing to wait for each other to catch up, then we can navigate those times together. You're not going to scare me off that easily," she said and offered a smile that didn't quite reach her eyes. "Furthermore, if I decide to live with you, I don't need 'a great place' to sweeten the deal. The only reason I need to take that step with you is, well, you," she explained. Andy couldn't help but smile at that, and he found himself meeting her gaze for the first time in a while. Her eyes were warm and inviting.

"I'm just trying so hard not to mess this thing up with you, Sharon,"

he explained.

"Well... Stop," She said with a serious tone. Andy gave her a worried look. "It seems to me that every time you try not to mess things up, you end up doing exactly that, so how about you stop worrying about messing up and just talk to me instead?" Andy let out a sigh and allowed a small smile cross his lips.

"I can do that," he agreed.

"Good," Sharon said and nodded. "And next time you want to make a huge decision about us, can we discuss it without involving Provenza, Buzz, a realtor, a dead body, and the entire LAPD?"

"Sounds good to me," he said with a smile. He paused for a moment and then took both of her hands in his. "I really am sorry, Sharon. I know having to watch that video in front of the squad was embarrassing, and I know how you feel about our personal relationship mixing with our professional one and I completely stomped all over it. So, yeah, I'm an idiot. But I promise to talk to you first going forward," he rambled.

Sharon smiled at his jumbled apology and nodded her head. "Ok, then let's get out of here and grab some dinner. I'm starving. That is, if you're up for it".

"Are you kidding? Dinner with you sounds perfect," he beamed. With that they both stood up, and Sharon gathered her things. After Andy had done the same, they walked towards the elevators.

Once inside the elevator car, Sharon reached over and took Andy's hand in her own. He smiled and squeezed her hand. She returned the gesture. Once they were out of the elevator, he walked her to her car. As they approached the driver's side door, Sharon let go of his hand. Andy gently grabbed her arm and pulled her to him. He looked her in her eyes and watched as she slowly closed them. He closed the gap between them and his lips met hers. He kissed her sweetly, but passionately and she eagerly returned it. When they reluctantly pulled apart, he kept his lips close to hers and whispered against them. "I really missed kissing you," he confessed.

Sharon smiled and nodded her head. "And here I was thinking that you missed me," she teased.

"Of course I missed you! Are you kidding? Last night was miserable! I just happen to have missed kissing you as well," he clarified. She just laughed and nodded her head.

He pulled away and started to move towards his car parked nearby. "Meet you at Gio's?" He inquired. She nodded again, and he turned back to his car. She opened her door and then turned back in his direction.

"We should talk about it," she called out to him. He turned in her direction with a confused look on his face. "Living together," she clarified. "It's definitely something we should talk about".

"Have you made a decision?" He asked cautiously.

"No, but I'd like to discuss it properly if you're truly serious

about it," she said contemplatively.

"I'm serious, Sharon," he said taking a few steps back in her direction. "I really was going to talk to you about it before I went and blew everything up," he said seriously, and Sharon detected the regret in his voice.

"We should get to Gio's before it gets too crowded," Sharon concluded and she noticed the tinge of disappointment on Andy's face. "I'd like to have plenty of time to talk".

And with that she was in her car with her door closed. Andy stood there for a moment and allowed a small bit of hope to wash over him.

* * *

><p>They managed to make it to the restaurant before the crowd. After they ordered, they sat in companionable silence. Or at least Sharon seemed to be. Andy, on the other hand, was wondering if he should bring up the whole living together thing or wait for her to do it. As it was, he was treading on thin ice and didn't want to push his luck.<p>

Sharon couldn't help but think about the rather large question that was hanging over her head. The truth was, she had thought about it. Not a lot, but she had entertained the idea a couple of times. She just had never come to a conclusion either way. The thought of sharing her life and living space with someone else after being on her own for more than two decades scared her. And then she worried that it might sink their relationship, but if that were the case, then maybe their relationship wasn't what she thought it was. There was also Rusty to consider, but he wouldn't be under her roof forever. Eventually, and Sharon hoped it was a far away eventually, he would crave his independence and want to live on his own. Suddenly, she heard Andy's voice and she was pulled from her thoughts.

"Did I lose you?" He asked gently. Her eyes met his and she smiled.

"No, I'm sorry. I was just thinking," she replied.

"That this conversation would be a lot easier if I hadn't screwed it up?" He said looking down at his empty bread plate.

"Not at all. This is a huge decision and any discussion about it was bound to be complicated," she assured him. "I've been on my own for a very long time, Andy. And even before that, I was alone for years. Other than my children, I haven't had to take another person's needs and wants and domesticity into consideration for a good portion of my adult life. I don't even know if I'm capable of it anymore, to be honest," she confessed looking down at and fiddling with her silverware. There was silence, and Sharon began to worry that she said something that upset Andy. She looked up at him to see if she could read his face.

"Hell, Sharon. I have no idea what I'm doing either. I've been alone for just as long, and I was shit at sharing my life with someone which is why I never imagined I'd be here again. But there is

something about you and us that makes me want to try again. And this time, I want to try harder because I want it to work. God, I want it to work," he explained gently before continuing.

"The thing is, I really like spending time with you outside of work. I love falling asleep wrapped up together and waking up with you in the morning. The problem is, we don't get enough of it now. If we decide to live together, that would change. Now, does that mean it's going to be hunky dory all the time? Of course not, but at least we would spend our time together," he concluded.

Sharon was silent. This was a big decision and she didn't make big decisions without thoroughly thinking them through. But wasn't that what she had been doing when she contemplated this move before? Hadn't she thought about all of the pros and cons?

Andy interpreted her silence as a sign that she did not agree. "Of course, we don't have to take this step, Sharon. I like where things are between us, and that's not going to change just because you aren't ready to move in together. I'll wait. I don't mind," he said with a reassuring smile.

Sharon let his words fill her mind and her heart. _I'll wait_. Wasn't Andy always waiting for her?

"No. I'm done stalling our relationship. I'm done letting my fear get in the way of my happiness. But most of all, I'm done making you wait," she said as tears started to form in her eyes.

"I don't mind, Sharon. I'd wait forever for you and you'd never hear me complain," he replied. Sharon reached across the table and took his hand in hers. She squeezed it and looked him in the eye.

"I know you would, but it's not right. The only thing holding me back is fear. At some point, I have to push past it and live my life. And I'm choosing now... With you," she said confidently. Andy couldn't help the smile that spread across his face. As happy as he was, though, he needed to be sure that this was what _she_ wanted.

"Are you sure, Sharon? I don't want you to do this for me..." He began before she interrupted him.

"I'm doing this for me and for us, Andy. And I am sure. As long as you're OK with living with a college kid, that is. We're kind of a package deal," she said with a smile. It was Andy's turn to squeeze her hand.

"Wouldn't want it any other way," he said with genuine affection in his voice. Just then, the server returned with their meals. They politely thanked him without ever taking their eyes off of one another. Their faces both held the same content grin.

Once they turned their attention to their respective meals, Sharon savored her food before pausing between bites.

"So... I guess we have some house hunting to do hmm?" She asked with a smile.

"I guess we do. You know, there's this great 3-bedroom, 2-bath ranch right near work. Rumor has it we can get it for a steal," he said

cheekily.

"You're not serious?" She asked incredulously.

"Something about a body being discovered there. Bet the seller would be willing to deal," he added just to see her reaction. She took another bite of her food before pausing.

"How about I spearhead the whole house search this time?" She asked, but it was more of a statement.

"Doesn't matter to me. As long as the result is you, me, the kid, and one roof, I'm in," he agreed. She just smiled at him and continued to eat her dinner.

Later after their stomachs were full and their hearts even fuller, they walked hand and hand out to their cars. They paused when they reached their separate rides home.

"Hopefully, we won't have to do this much longer," Andy mused. Sharon stepped closer to him and ran her hands up his chest before threading them behind his neck. She pulled him closer to her and whispered against his lips.

"I can't wait".

And with that she closed the small gap between them and lost herself in the sensation of his mouth on hers and the knowledge that these parking lot goodbyes would soon be a thing of the past. That brought her a certain peace, and she couldn't help but feel giddy about the next step in their formerly old fashioned relationship. Suddenly, moving forward didn't feel like such a big step anymore, it felt just right.

THE END

End
file.